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ABSTRACT

Two papers address integration of students with disabilities and the implementation of change in special education services in Winnipeg (Manitoba, Canada) schools. The first paper briefly describes such Winnipeg programs as Project CHAMPS, which focuses on establishing enabling learning environments; the furtherance of human rights and accessibility in the schools; the Discover project, an active learning program on disability awareness; the Banner Project in which students create banners around the theme of integrating individuals with exceptionalities, which are then hung in community businesses; the Circle of Friends project, in which students commit to helping another student with special needs; the Yes I Can awards for students with disabilities; certificates of recognition for students who have assisted special needs students); and Project Learn, which promotes use of enabling technology in special education and employment. The second paper describes the overall goals and services of Winnipeg special education services and reports on progress during 1991/92. Summary program descriptions and data for several of the projects described in the first paper are provided. Finally, a mission statement lists nine beliefs of the Winnipeg special education department. (DB)

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Assessing Your School Climate for Integration and Developing Strategies for Change

[and]

From Vision to Commitment Kaleidoscopes: Project Change

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EC 302487

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Special Education Department March 1993

SPECIAL ED ition

Assessing Your School Climate for Integration and Developing Strategies for Change

Positive attitudes and community acceptance are vital components when welcoming exceptional children into neighbourhood schools. **Project CHAMPS** is designed to create situations in which children can grow and develop in positive ways.

Project CHAMPS provides for strategies to facilitate the inclusion of students with exceptional needs into their schools and community. It targets the establishment of *enabling learning environments* in which children with disabilities can grow and develop in positive ways.

The policy of the Winnipeg School Division, in relation to special education programs, states " insofar as is possible, the supports and/or special programs will be provided in the least restrictive environment and shall encourage integration of students in a regular school environment".

In the belief that "all children should have access to resources which will enable them to benefit from an education within their community ", supports are allocated to provide for effective services for students with special needs within regular classroom settings. More children are being served in their home schools as buildings become accessible and resources available.

The thrust toward integration began at the elementary level. Many of these students are now beginning to move into secondary settings within their communities. Students with multiple/physical disabilities have been identified throughout the system and their transitions projected. In addition, there has been an increase in the number of students entering the school system who have a wide range of disabilities including hearing and vision impairments, language disorders, moderate to profound developmental disabilities, physical and multiple disabilities, and behaviour/emotional disorders.

Human Rights in the School

Acceptance of students with disabilities is one aspect of the larger area of human rights. A practical guide has been developed by the Manitoba Human Rights Commission and piloted in a number of Winnipeg schools including Brock Corydon, Gordon Bell, and Kelvin. This inventory is intended to assist educators in establishing a learning environment in which students have equality of learning opportunities, in which students can fully participate, and in which fairness prevails. The guide describes the establishment of a committee to review the school human rights practices and to structure a process to strengthen the observance of human rights principles within the school. It includes a checklist which examines attitudes toward students who have diverse learning, cultural, and linguistic needs. One section addresses issues of physical and mental ability as follows:

1. Is the school and all of its facilities and services accessible to and usable by people with disabilities?
2. Are students with disabilities integrated, where reasonable, into regular

classrooms and are their special needs reasonably accommodated?

3. Are teachers who have integrated classes knowledgeable of appropriate teaching strategies?
4. Are decisions regarding the integration of students with disabilities into 'regular' classrooms made with qualified and objective assessment and consultation between students, parents, teachers, school administrators, and resource persons?
5. Do ongoing professional development programs offer opportunities for staff to learn about disabilities and about ways of supporting students who are disabled?
6. Are teachers made aware of the characteristics and learning styles of students with physical, mental, and learning disabilities?
7. Are students taught how physical and attitudinal barriers discriminate against people with disabilities?
8. (a) Does the school make reasonable efforts to accommodate students with disabilities in school athletic programs?
   (b) Where reasonable accommodation is not possible, does the school develop alternatives which provide parallel learning opportunities?

The process involves both parents and school staff. The assessment assists schools in developing an action plan for improving the human rights climate in the school. A copy of the booklet ***Human Rights in the School: Guidelines for Educators, Students, Parents and Other School Participants*** was sent to all schools in Manitoba.

Cathi Hill from Brock Corydon School is willing to act as a resource to interested schools.

Discover Together/Banner Project

Various programs have been successful in changing attitudes, skills, and knowledge necessary for fostering enabling learning environments. Two existing programs ***Discover Together*** and the ***Banner Project,*** developed by the Secretary of State, are being used successfully in the Winnipeg School Division.

Discover Together is an active learning program on disability awareness for students in kindergarten to grade eight. It is designed to assist teachers in promoting student awareness and understanding of disabilities and of the barriers that can exist between people. Its units cover six disability groups: visual, hearing, mobility, developmental, learning, and other. The ***Discover Together*** resource kit is available by writing Mr. Daryl Rock, Disabled Persons Participation Project, Secretary of State, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0M5.

The Special Education Department has compiled a themed unit which augments the ***Discover Together*** package. This unit is designed to look at individual differences and disabilities. The kits contain books, teaching aids, lesson plans, audio-visual supports, work sheets, teacher manuals, and hands-on equipment. There are two levels of kits: 1-3, and 3-6. The unit integrates objectives in social studies, language arts, and health. The primary kit focuses on "likeness", while the intermediate kit focuses on real people.

The kits are available for loan to people who have participated in a ***Kids Come in Different Flavours*** workshop, or through the integration support teacher in your area. Laura Secord, Grosvenor, and River Heights Schools have used the kits and would probably share their experiences.

To get the maximum benefit out of this program, it is highly recommended that guest speakers with particular disabilities be invited to address the students. This person can explain how he/she has overcome the barriers which the students may experience through the activities, and contribute as a first-hand resource to the discussion. A resource bank of speakers has been identified by the Special Education Department.

The National Access Awareness Week School ***Banner Project*** has created a partnership between school children and the business community. Students create banners around various exceptionalities and the theme of integration. The banners created are a visibly powerful statement of the challenges of integration faced by students with disabilities. Their empowering messages create a new appreciation among both the corporate sector and the general public for the barriers faced by students with exceptionalities. Banners are paraded during National Access Awareness Week and hung in various business establishments. Last year,

students from Sargent Park School were involved in making colorful handsewn banners depicting various aspects of integration around the theme ***Together We Can.***

Circle of Friends

Circle of Friends is another project undertaken by some schools. A ***Circle of Friends*** is students making a commitment to help another student to be included. It involves usually 8 to 12 peers who volunteer to be a friendship circle for a particular student.

The term ***Circle of Friends*** grew from the idea that most people have relationships of varying intimacy that might be thought of as concentric circles with the person at the centre. Their inner circles consist of family and those people with whom they are closest. Then there is the circle which includes their good friends. More distant circles include acquaintances, people in service roles, community helpers, etc. For some people with special needs, the circle of good friends is missing. They often have not had the opportunities to develop those friendships that are so sustaining for most of us. The ***Circle of Friends*** simulates those relationships for persons who have not yet developed good friendships on their own.

Several schools in the Winnipeg School Division, including River Heights, Churchill, and General Wolfe, have begun to use the ***Circle of Friends*** concept as a support strategy for students with special needs. With the assistance of a staff person who acts as a facilitator, a circle is recruited, developed, and sustained. The students who form the circle reach out to and include the target student in day-to-day activities. The hope is that from this start, the target student will eventually develop personal relationships with some members of the circle and other students.

When you consider how important good friends are to satisfying lifestyles, it is encouraging to see students with special needs enjoy that satisfaction with a little help from their friends.

Yes I Can Awards

Several students from the Division were nominated for, and received ***Yes I Can*** Awards from the Manitoba Council for Exceptional Children. At the annual conference this year, five students, accompanied by their parents and friends, celebrated their achievements. The awards ceremonies included the following presentation announcements.

Sarah Mackenzie

Sarah is twelve years old, attends Brock Corydon School, and is being recognized for her achievements in independent living. She has worked for many years on her physiotherapy program to gain the strength and balance to walk unassisted. Her communication skills have improved significantly and she is more willing to risk interactions and will persevere until she is successful. Sarah is feeling confident about herself and has developed a good relationship with her peers. Gains in social interactions have given Sarah more independence. Good work Sarah!

Marina Chartrand

Marina attends Lord Roberts School and is being recognized for her improved independent living skills. Marina is becoming more attentive with increased eye contact. She is developing appropriate gestures for expressing her wants and needs, following the directions of her assistants, and learning through hand-over-hand instruction to take a more active role in her personal care. Marina is enjoying the interaction with others and continues to improve her skills. Keep up the good work Marina!

Andrew Smith

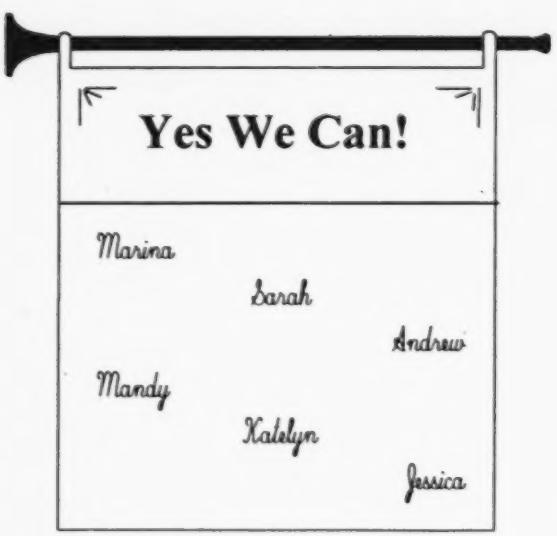
Andrew is being recognized for his academic achievements. He is in his third year at River Heights Junior High and has achieved at a consistently high level. Andrew is fully integrated into regular junior high classes. He works on an alternate individualized program in math. In all other subject areas, Andrew's program parallels the regular curriculum. He participates fully and enthusiastically in all class activities, cooperative learning experiences, and project work. Andrew is well-liked and well-respected by all his peers. He has shown leadership abilities in the classroom and in the athletic program. Each of Andrew's achievements has added to his sense of self-worth and increased his willingness to try new things. Congratulations Andrew!

Mandy Thomas

Mandy also attends Lord Roberts School and is being recognized for her academic achievements. In the past two years, she has made excellent progress in her Language Arts program. Mandy has overcome a reluctance to risk speaking and participating in language activities to become a confident writer and speller. Mandy has developed a positive attitude towards learning and feels more confident about her abilities. Her maturity is seen in all areas - from the lunch room, where she helps others, to the classroom, where she is always prepared to put in her best effort. Congratulations Mandy!

Katelyn Grisim

Katelyn is seven years old and also attends Lord Roberts School. As a result of contracting encephalitis, Katelyn has spent the past three years relearning how to talk and how to walk. She has daily sessions for speech including articulation and voice intensity, and physiotherapy to learn to sit, stand, bear her own weight, pull herself up and down from sitting to standing, walk using a walker, and operate a motorized wheelchair. Despite these daily sessions, Katelyn has managed to keep up academically with her peers. Katelyn has tremendous courage and determination. She faces each challenge with great effort and an enormous smile. Keep up the good work Katelyn!



Certificate of Recognition

In addition, 1993 was the initial year for presentation of ***Certificates of Recognition*** for students who have assisted students with special needs to achieve success. The intent of the certificates is to bring children and youth together for the celebration of their joint accomplishments. A student from Winnipeg School Division was one of three recipients this year:

Jessica Arnett

Jessica is a student at Grosvenor School and has been very helpful in assisting students in her class who have impairments. By working to include these students with special needs into classroom and school activities, Jessica has eased their transition into school life at Grosvenor. Her patience and understanding are much appreciated. Congratulations Jessica!

Project LEARN

- ***Meeting the Challenge: Enabling Technology in Special Education and Employment - April 29, 30, 1993***

The University of Winnipeg and CASS (Computer Access for Special Students) are sponsoring this conference to enhance the ability to access and implement technological solutions to enable challenged individuals to more fully participate in society. Users, educators, clinicians, therapists, service providers, parents, employment equity officers, and employers are invited to attend a wide range of sessions focusing on using technology to support physically disabled, visually impaired, developmentally disabled, learning disabled, and deaf individuals. To receive a conference brochure and registration, contact Wendy Fidkalo at 253-1454.

- ***Gentle Teaching***

The Special Education Department and the South District sponsored a half-day consultation with John McGee regarding ***Gentle Teaching*** which is an alternative strategy for behaviour management.

From Vision to Commitment

Kaleidoscopes:Project Change

The Special Education Department is committed to meeting the individual needs of children through Enabling Learning Environments.

The Winnipeg School Division No. 1
June 1992

KALEIDOSCOPES: PROJECT CHANGE
SYSTEMS CHANGE + ADULT CHANGE = STUDENT CHANGE

The Winnipeg School Division No. 1 provides support and/or special programs for exceptional needs students who have special learning needs due to intellectual, social, physical, and/or psychological deficits. Supports are provided in the form of:

- *trained specialists;*
- *special equipment, materials, and/or physical facilities;*
- *special and/or modified curriculums and supports within regular classrooms;*
- *special instructional settings and teaching strategies.*

Special education services may be provided to students with the following exceptional needs:

- *moderate and severe hearing impairment;*
- *visual impairment;*
- *orthopedic or multiple disabilities;*
- *mild to severe mental retardation;*
- *severe learning disability/language disorder;*
- *emotional disturbance;*
- *behaviour disorder.*

Special education supports consist of a continuum designed to meet the differential needs of students who require intensive additional assistance in order to learn and maximize potential. Insofar as is possible, the supports and/or special programs will be provided in the least restrictive environment and shall encourage integration of students in a regular school environment. The model is non-categorical and provides for a range of student placements ranging from accommodation in regular educational settings to very specialized programs. The model consists of the provision of supports at several levels.

CONTINUUM OF DIVISIONAL SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORTS

A. Special Education Supports at Home School
B. Special Education Centres Within Catchment Areas
C. Divisional Programs
D. Community Programs

FOCUSING THE VISION 1991/92

KALEIDOSCOPES - PROJECT CHANGE serves to provide the framework and impetus for change at several levels.

At the systems level, **Project LINCS** was successful in bringing people together in partnerships (family, school, and community) to facilitate innovative interventions and effective programming for students with special needs.

Special Education Department services shifted from direct provision to support. Responsibilities for program administration, student identification, and services now belong to school-based support teams. Procedures were streamlined for intake/entry and computerized formats were developed for IEP's and low incidence support applications. With the shift in the pattern of planning and service delivery, more relevant decision-making processes have been established to provide for direction from the school and catchment area level.

Each area coordinates its special education planning and cooperative ventures through a **management committee**. Membership includes administrators, teachers, and clinical representatives. This year, management committees became fully operational in each district. They contributed to the Division-wide needs assessment by conducting assessments of student needs within their area. They provided feedback to the **Division Planning Committee** on a variety of topics and provided a link to the teachers within each district. They also provided a locus of coordination for professional development within their districts.

The **Division Steering Committee**, composed of administrative representatives from each management team, collated district and Division information for the Annual Division Action Plan. The concerns and plans of each area were shared to provide for coordination, planning, and sharing of resources, which allows for the identification of patterns and service needs that are affecting more than one catchment area. The committee reviewed and developed more relevant procedures and guidelines in keeping with the move toward decentralized services. In collaboration with other stakeholders (Child Guidance Clinic, parents, teachers, Special Education Department), they developed a *Guide to Special Education Services in the Winnipeg School Division*, which will be distributed in September 1992.

Program advisories met throughout the year to problem-solve and develop long-range plans. Recommendations were made to relocate some programs in order to provide more appropriate services for students. Relocations included a Learning Assistance Centre, Language Disorders Program, Aural Rehabilitation Program, and Physical/Multiple Disabilities Program.

The **Early Childhood Network** was established with community agencies to identify preschool students entering the system, facilitate long-range planning, and smooth transition from preschool to school.

The **Long-Range Planning Committee** met regularly in order to identify students moving into and through the system, determine building modifications required, and coordinate submissions to the Public Schools Finance Board. Several environmental modifications were made in order to provide students with access to their home school, and several other projects have been submitted for assessment. The Public Schools Finance Board recently approved funding for a life skills facility at Lord Roberts School.

The Special Education Department is working with other school divisions and agencies on a research project on model transition practices from school to adult life. We continue to participate with the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba, and will be offering a course toward the Post Baccalaureate program within the Winnipeg School Division in September 1992.

The **Division Planning Committee**, composed of representatives of all the stakeholders, coordinated the Annual Division Action Plan. They developed a policy and process for parental appeal, as well as *A Parent's Guide to Special Education*.

The **SPECIAL ED*ition* newsletter** was published twice during the year to facilitate communication.

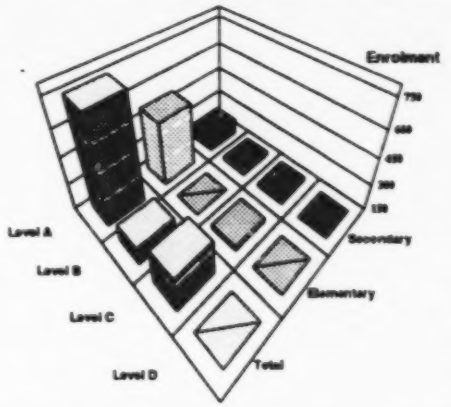
Project CHAMPS meets the needs of students through the provision of "enabling learning environments". The model provides for a continuum of services with an emphasis on integration. A process model emphasizes early identification and prereferral intervention through school-based resources prior to special education referral.

In the belief that "all children should have access to resources which will enable them to benefit from an education within their community", supports are now being allocated to provide for effective services for students with special needs within regular classroom settings.

At the start of the 1980's, the dominant service delivery model involved the education of students with special needs in separate classrooms, schools, and communities. Within classrooms we can now individualize instruction without creating an academic caste system. The special education thrust has been to broaden the continuum of services, so that services are available within the least restrictive environment. New patterns of service delivery and planning developed as more schools provided school-based services. 97% of the eligible schools provide school-based resources to serve students in their communities.

In 1991/92, a total of 1,354 students (768 elementary and 586 secondary), approximately 4% of the students in the Division, received special education services through a variety of programs. The majority of the Division's schools (97%) now provide integrated supports so students can attend their home school. 56% of the students were supported in regular education classes in their home school; 74% of the students were supported within their catchment area.

	Level A	Level B	Level C	Level D	Total
Elem.	512 (67%)	77 (10%)	173 (22%)	6 (1%)	768
Sec.	239 (41%)	168 (29%)	170 (29%)	9 (1%)	586
Totals:	751 (56%)	245 (18%)	343 (25%)	15 (1%)	1,354

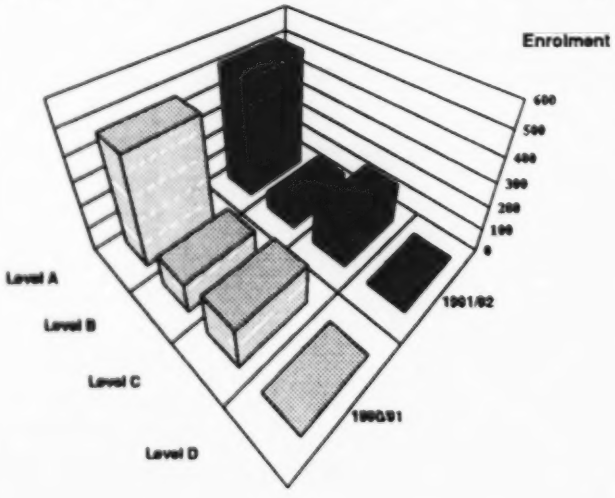


The increase in numbers over last year (76) reflects increases at the secondary level (67) as students move up through the system. There was also a shift (5%) in the site of service delivery from Division-wide to home school.

The following charts show the statistical breakdown in placements and the comparison to 1990/91.

Elementary

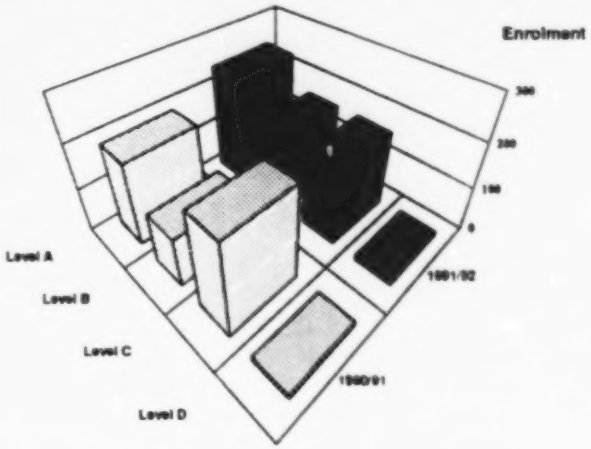
	Level A	Level B	Level C	Level D	Total
1990/91	462	124	169	4	759
1991/92	512	77	173	6	768



FOCUSING THE VISION

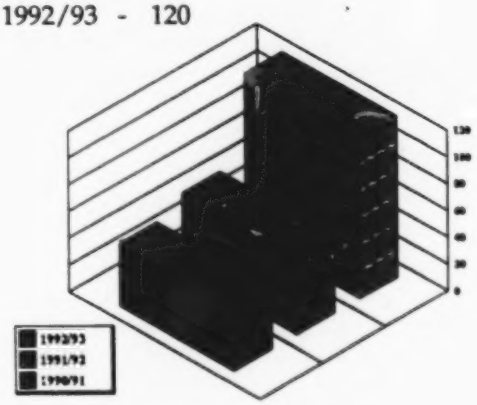
Secondary

	LEVEL A	LEVEL B	LEVEL C	LEVEL D	TOTAL
1990/91	186	111	213	9	519
1991/92	239	168	170	9	586



An additional trend is reflected in the data for school entry. Each year, for the past three years, the number of five-year-old children referred for special education supports has increased:

1990/91 - 46
1991/92 - 57
1992/93 - 120



Student needs encompass a wide range of disabilities and require supports in a variety of areas including occupational/physio therapy, audiology, speech/language, vision, teacher of the deaf, teacher assistant support; specialized equipment; building accessibility; and specialized instruction. More of these children are being served within their home school as buildings become accessible and resources available. The highlight of **Project CHAMPS** was the participation of students from Sargent Park School in **National Access Awareness Week's Banner Project**. This project provides an opportunity to sensitize students and adults to the needs of students with disabilities. The colourful, hand-sewn banners depicting various aspects of integration around the theme "Together We Can", were paraded during NAAW and have been hung in local business establishments. Other schools became actively involved in projects around the theme of "Discover Together" and Brock Corydon's inclusive model of service was presented at the International Council for Exceptional Children Conference in Baltimore, Maryland. Several children were honoured with "Yes I Can" awards from the CEC.

Project CHAMPS also saw the development of several modules related to skill development and peer intervention. With the emergence of technology, another avenue for learning and communication has been opened for students with special needs. A specialized equipment committee was formed to determine need and provide information regarding resources in this area.

Project LEARN brought adults together to facilitate changes in attitudes, knowledge, and skills. In addition, workshops, inservices, and study groups were coordinated and presented by the Special Education Department. The Winnipeg School Division was one of the sponsors and presenters at the one-day conference on "School As Community" during National Access Awareness Week. Winnipeg hosted the National Kick-Off for this annual consciousness-raising event, and Winnipeg School Division's "Project Kaleidoscopes" was featured. A videotape, which provides an overview of this project, is available.

With the thrust toward local management and decision-making, **Project ROLES** redefined the purpose and roles of personnel. The resulting partnership between special and regular education has resulted in new forms of instruction and collaboration. The special education team now includes educators, parents, clinicians, support personnel, students, and community personnel. The delivery of special education has become a shared responsibility of all the stakeholders.

Linking Individuals Through Coordinated Systems
Family - School - Community

Project LINCS engages people in collaborative strategies to address the changing needs of children and develop the partnerships necessary for effective interventions.

In order to develop partnerships, Project LINCS has fostered and created organizational links with various stakeholders in the belief that:

Effective Partnerships = Effective Interventions

Special Education Planning Committee

Special Education Steering Committee

Area Management Committees

School-Based Support Teams

Program Advisories

Child Guidance Liaison Committee

Long-Range Planning Team

Community/Government/University
Early Childhood Transition Network
Community Transition Employers Advisory

Parents
Ellen Douglass Parents' Association
Life Skills Parent Advisory
Parent Information Brochure

SPECIAL ED*ition* Newsletter

ADULT CHANGE: PROJECT LEARN

Leading Education Through Adult Renewal

Project LEARN brings adults together to facilitate changes in the attitudes, skills, and knowledge necessary for fostering enabling learning environments. Positive attitudes and effective teaching strategies are vital to instructional outcomes and student success.

Consultants/Special Education Support Teachers
Consultation, Collaboration Inservices, Workshops Program Planning and Development Demonstration Lessons Networking

Professional Development Modules
Debunking the Myths - Awareness and Sensitization The Way It Is - Policy and Philosophy Access - Enabling Learning Environments ESP - Effective Strategy Planning SEEC - Special Education Effective Competencies Non-Violent Crisis Prevention Intervention Behaviour Management in the Classroom Integration and Planning Across the Curriculum

Peer Support/Study Groups

School As Community
(National Access Awareness Week)

University of Manitoba Partnership

Resource Options Promoting Learning for Exceptional Students

Project ROLES engages professionals in the development of collaborative service delivery models which facilitate "enabling learning environments" and "meeting children's needs together".

Service Delivery Model
Special Education Department Services
Special Education Teachers
School-Based Student Support Teams
Teacher Assistance Teams
Team Teaching
Teacher Assistants
Child Guidance Clinic
School Therapy Services

Professional Development Modules
Collaboration in Problem-Solving
Collaboration to Meet Student Needs
Conducting Conferences
Modifying Curriculum for All Students
Note Taking
Orientation to Special Education
Orientation to Special Education for Principals
Program Modification - Roles and Responsibilities
Referrals to Special Education Made Easy
The Role/Function of Teacher Assistants in Work Education
The Special Education Teacher's Role and Responsibilities
Team Planning
Team Planning for Curriculum Implementation
Teaming and Collaboration Skills as Applied to Group Problems
Teaming Up on Student Needs
What is Involved in Being a Teacher Assistant

STUDENT CHANGE: PROJECT CHAMPS

Children Are Making Progress in School

Project CHAMPS creates situations in which children can grow and develop in positive ways. A life-span approach addresses the individual needs of children in facilitating academic, behavioural, and attitudinal change. Project CHAMPS provides for strategies to facilitate the inclusion of students with exceptional needs into their schools and communities.

Enabling Learning Environments Model
Early Identification Program Prereferral Intervention Continuum of Supports

Peer Intervention/Awareness
Cross-Age and Peer Tutoring Peer Counselling Circle of Friends Discover Together/The Banner Project

Skill Development
Curriculum Modification/Program Adaptation (IEP) Academic Instruction Prosocial Skills Instruction Clinical Intervention Adaptive Physical Education Adaptive Aquatics Augmentative Communication Computer-Assisted Learning Pre-Vocational/Vocational Training Transition to Employment

TRUE FRIENDS:

Being handicapped is like being in a darkened world, in which only you can see out and only your true friends can see in. True friends don't talk about you, they talk with you. They see you with their heart, not their eyes. They accept you for what you are, not what you aren't. (Marlaine Myk and Julia Tapscott, Students, Brock Corydon School)

MISSION AND BELIEFS

In keeping with our role and mission statement in special education, we shall be governed by the following beliefs:

- Schools play a critical role in developing inclusive communities in which all individuals belong, regardless of their differences.
- All students should have access to resources which enable them to benefit from an education within their community.
- In recognition that learning is a lifelong process for all, curriculum provides for the development of skills and knowledge to enable each student to live a meaningful, self-fulfilling life, with as much independence as possible.
- The individual student is the first priority and curriculum is adaptable to meet individual differences so that each student has the opportunity to experience success in learning.
- The special education service delivery model considers the child's needs within a context of the various systems which have an impact upon the child: family, school, and community.
- Special education, as one component of a continuum of educational services, works collaboratively to provide the most enabling learning environment for students with the most complex educational needs.
- Enabling learning environments include:
  - well-qualified teachers;
  - trained auxiliary personnel;
  - opportunities for ongoing professional development;
  - appropriate materials and equipment;
  - pedagogical programs which reflect educational excellence.
- Service shall be delivered in a manner which recognizes the strengths of individuals and treats all people with dignity and respect.
- Cooperation, collaboration, and open communication are crucial in an effective service delivery model.

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